Cooperative Accomplishments
(2000-2002 Results)

There are many success stories to share in looking back at the goals from the Statewide Information Technology Plan 2000. The investments made in the last two years are paying big dividends for North Dakota taxpayers and form a solid foundation for moving forward.

Build E-Government

This year, the state launched 17 new online services bringing the total number of e-government services to 37. One of the most successful accomplishments is the online renewal of motor vehicle registration. The new system accepts credit cards and has reduced turnaround time by approximately three weeks. Within the first month of operation, more than 1,648 online renewals were completed.

In September, the Secretary of State's office began offering direct filing of Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) and Central Notice System information electronically. This is part of an ongoing strategy to deploy web-based tools for businesses. Earlier they deployed a tool to give customers the ability to search the agency's nearly 85,000 business records online for instantaneous, 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week access.

North Dakota ranked high in a number of national surveys:

- 8th in the Digital States Survey in the Digital Democracy category, up from 38th the previous year and the most improved state in 2001

- 4th in the Digital States Survey in the Administration and Management category in 2002

- 7th in the Digital States Survey in the Taxation/Revenue category in 2001

- Among the top five states for the most citizen-friendly web portals in the nation in a recent Pricewaterhouse Coopers study

- 3rd in disability access and 12th overall compared to other states in a Brown University study in 2001

Promote Anytime, Anywhere Education

The Educational Technology Council (ETC) awarded over $2,100,000 in grants to 81 schools in six consortiums for the purposes of implementing video networking. Fall 2002 statistics indicate that 2,376 high school students are enrolled in 166 video courses.

An Education Week Technology Counts 2002 survey placed North Dakota first in the percent of teachers using the Internet at 87 percent. North Dakota ranked first among schools with Internet access from one or more classrooms at 97 percent, tied for third in the number of students per computer (2.8), and was fourth in students per Internet-connected computer at 4.9.

North Dakota is also one of only 12 states to have a "virtual high school." As part of an ETC-funded pilot project, The Division of Independent Study is offering a two-semester Spanish course to students in seven high schools using a combination of web-based activities and live video interaction.

North Dakota University System Online offers one-stop access to a wide variety of distance education courses available from the 11 colleges and universities that comprise the University Systems.

Encourage Enterprise-Wide Solutions

North Dakota continues to gain national recognition for our state's innovativeness and holistic approach in implementing technology solutions.

ConnectND is a project to replace the financial, human resource and student information systems of government and higher education with a single vendor solution. We are the first state in the nation to aggregate the information from all these entities into one system. Mayville State University and Valley City State University launched components of the system as pilot sites in October 2002.

A Geographic Information Systems (GIS) "hub" was implemented in July 2002 and web-based tools were made available online in October 2002. The web-based tools and central repository of maps and other location-based information make data easily available to all levels of government and the public as well.

PowerSchool is a promising new student information system being implemented in school districts statewide. This system provides a cost-effective, reliable, state-of-the-art student information system to help schools manage student information, collect data and report information to state and federal agencies. The Bismarck Public School system launched the pilot program in the 2001-2002 school year and now Beulah, Carson, Belcourt and Stanley are using the system. PowerSchool is scheduled for implementation in up to 30 districts by October 2003.

The Criminal Justice Information Sharing (CJIS) Initiative is a coordinated effort across all criminal justice organizations to provide effective information systems to capture and share complete, accurate

and timely information needed to make quick, informed decisions. Standards for data sharing have been developed and a plan for providing the required technology is being implemented.

Federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability (HIPAA) mandates have a broad impact on government and health providers in the state. The state has completed an assessment to determine the agencies impacted and will coordinate compliance efforts. The State HIPAA Coordinator also facilitates the sharing of information regarding the interpretation of the law and strategies for compliance.

Reinvent Government

The first step in reinventing government is analyzing our current processes and identifying potential for efficiency. Approximately 100 state employees attended training to learn about business process reengineering tools and techniques. The Department of Transportation provided additional training opportunities to their employees.

The Tax Department has demonstrated the effectiveness of centralized Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) services by automating tax return processing, saving nearly 4,000 hours in temporary staff time and $63,000 in paper storage costs.

Strengthen Information Technology Professionals

Two bills passed during the 2001 legislative session, House Bill 1119 and House Bill 1120, provide additional flexibility for state agencies in recruiting and retaining employees. Agencies have used this flexibility and are evaluating the results.

Advance Project Management

More than 100 state employees have been certified in project management through a course offered by Mayville State University resulting in better qualified individuals to manage projects.

In the last year, 14 large projects (projects costing $250,000 in one biennium or $500,000 during the life of the project) were successfully completed. Seven of these projects were completed on or under budget with a total savings of $1,813,350. Of the projects completed over budget, the total overrun was $175,995.

Coordinate Technology Research and Planning

The Information Technology Department began offering Innovative Technology Forums on a quarterly basis. More than 100 people attended in person and 42 people viewed the live web cast of the forum on the topic of wireless technology. Other topics have included continuity planning and video technologies.

Fund Innovations

Funding was not appropriated during the 2001 legislative session for the "Innovation Fund." Bonding will be pursued this biennium as a way to finance the ConnectND project.

Integrate State Broadband Network

This most notable achievement in the last biennium was completion of the statewide network called STAGEnet. This network provides high-speed, broadband connections to 192 North Dakota communities and 202 schools for a total of 456 sites. Currently, 29 libraries are also connected to the network giving public access to the Internet to those who can't afford a connection to their homes.

A University of North Dakota Social Science Research Institute survey completed in June of 2002 showed North Dakota to be one of the best-connected states in the nation. Eighty percent of businesses and 70 percent of citizens indicated they used the Internet.

Modify Public Policy

E-signature legislation was passed during the 2001 legislative session to give digital signatures the same legal weight as traditional signatures. During the 2001-02 interim, the Legislative Information Technology Committee studied the technology capacity and needs of the state in response to House Concurrent Resolution 3057. Statute changes to protect security information like passwords and user IDs are being proposed in the 2003 legislative session.

Develop Workforce

The North Dakota Workforce Development Council, in cooperation with a number of other organizations, has a project underway to survey employers' needs for qualified technology workers and plan for the development of training programs.

The Educational Technology Council (ETC) and EduTech provided a number of professional development opportunities for school administrators and teachers. This included, among others, the North Dakota Technology Academy for School Leaders attended by 475 superintendents and building principals.

Enhance State Radio Network

The state radio network expanded its mobile data terminal system by five towers, bringing the total number of vehicles with network access to 95 highway patrol vehicles. Changes in technology and a mandate from the Federal Communications Commission require a statewide upgrade from an analog to a digital system. This goal continues to be a part of the 2002 statewide plan to maintain compatibility throughout the state.